

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER 2015

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You can tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English on HF and on many VHF and UHF repeaters around our country. Echolink listeners can connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League web site.

This audio bulletin can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za. You will find this bulletin and previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you can sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

IN THE NEWS TODAY

HAMMIES AMATEUR RADIO CLUB TO ACTIVATE ZS9YOTA

NOMINATIONS FOR THE SARL COUNCIL AS WELL AS MOTIONS FOR THE AGM INVITED

SPORADIC E SEASON OPEN

SARL CONTEST MANUAL FOR 2016 AVAILABLE

ITU WORLD RADIOCOMMUNICATION CONFERENCE FINDS AMATEUR BANDS UNSUITABLE FOR NON-AMATEUR SATELLITES

Stay tuned for more on these but first some short news from all over

** If you are going to the coast for holiday then take a 144 MHz and/or 50 MHz rig with you including a small Yagi antenna. Just imagine sitting around the braai fire at night, with a beer in one hand and a microphone in the other, chatting to distant Hams via Tropo Ducting along the coast. The early mornings will always provide long distance contacts and do watch out for unexpected Sporadic-E openings. Enjoy your holiday and the best VHF propagation conditions of the year!

** The 2016 edition of the Contest Manual "Blue Book" has been published and can be downloaded from www.sarl.org.za/public/contests/contestrules.asp

** Kosovo is admitted as an IARU Member Society. Following a vote by all the Member Societies in IARU Regions 1, 2 and 3, the Kosovo Amateur Radio Association (SHRAK) was admitted as a member society in Region 1. Sixty-six member societies voted in favour with five against and three abstentions.

** Johan Sevenster ZS1A has recently submitted an application to DXCC that places him on the DXCC Honour Roll, both on Mixed modes and Phone. Johan became only the third ZS1 on both Rolls, behind ZS1FJ and ZS1AU.

Johan's most recent new contact was with Willis Island, leaving him with nine DXCC entities unworked. The Honour Roll honours individuals who need less than 10 current entities. Johan has another eight deleted entities, with a grand total of 339 credits.

** The new 2016 ARRL Handbook is now available from the SA Amateur Radio Development Trust book store. Stocks are limited and considering the poor Rand/Dollar exchange rate the books are available at a marginally increased price over the 2015 version. Also now available is a McGraw Hill book : Arduino Projects for Amateur Radio. Details and order forms can be downloaded from www.amateurradio.org.za

** Estè Gross, Presenter at Radio Sonder Grense the Afrikaans Radio service of the SABC recently recorded an interview with Jaap Lourens ZS6SAI and Nico van Rensburg ZS6QL focusing on Amateur radio and the South African Radio League. This interview is scheduled to be broadcast on 16 December in the time slot between 09:00 and 12:00 the morning during the program "Oggend op RSG". The recording was done at the NARC at Radiokop. After the broadcast a podcast of the interview will be available on the RSG website, www.rsg.co.za

** The request, please do the final courtesy and send a QSL card or electronic confirmation of your contact. There are still those who are hunting awards who need these.

** SA AMSAT's stand at the Science Forum South Africa which was held at the CSIR conference centre on 7 and 8 December was visited by many delegates and dignitaries from the Department of Science and Technology, the SA Space Agency and the Education Department. Various elements of KletsKous, SA AMSAT's CubeSat project were on display with demonstration of the operational prototype of the transponder.

SA AMSAT also launched the "Take your science project into space with Amateur Radio" initiative. For more information about the initiative visit www.amsatsa and download the information leaflet

KletsKous is sponsored by donations from the amateur radio community. To make your contribution get bank account details from www.amsatsa.org.za.

** We have now entered the season of Sporadic-E propagation in the southern hemisphere. Keep an eye on 50 MHz beacons that are outside the skip zone from about 08:30 CAT in the mornings. In the past daily openings around midday were observed for a month or two from Zimbabwe and Zambia when their Band 1 TV stations were still on the air. Beacons that are being monitored should be regularly checked for unpredictable Es openings. According to comments on the VK Logger they are expecting plenty of activity from Sporadic-E on both 50 and 144 MHz.

A Sporadic-E report was received from Etienne Swart, ZS6Y, that he heard a FM broadcast station (possibly from the Cape Town area) on Monday at 17:30 CAT for about five minutes before it faded out. On a Saturday afternoon way

back in 1989 a massive Sporadic-E opening occurred between Port Elizabeth and Outjo, Namibia on 50 MHz. It lasted for about three hours with S9 plus signals, and Hannes Vorster, ZS2BE, and Owen Wheeler, ZS2HZ, at Port Elizabeth had a field day working Kosie du Buisson, ZS3E, in Outjo who was later joined by Hans Moller, ZS2AK, at Windhoek. Unfortunately many other VHF amateurs did not know about this fantastic Es opening.

** The World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) held in Geneva during November 2015 has recommended an agenda for the next WRC, to be held in 2019, to the Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). One of the agenda items is of particular interest to the small-satellite community.

Agenda item 1.7 for WRC-19 reads, “to study the spectrum needs for telemetry, tracking and command in the space operation service for non-GSO satellites with short duration missions, to assess the suitability of existing allocations to the space operation service and, if necessary, to consider new allocations, in accordance with Resolution COM6/19 (WRC-15).”

Resolution COM6/19, which eventually will be given a new number, specifies the frequency ranges that may be considered for possible new allocations. They are 150,05 to 174 MHz and 400,15 to 420 MHz.

One of the factors that the conference considered in deciding on these particular frequency ranges was “that some non-amateur satellites have used frequencies for telemetry, tracking and command in the frequency bands 144 to 146 MHz and 435 to 438 MHz which are allocated to the amateur-satellite service and that such use is not in accordance with Nos. 1.56 and 1.57.” Those two provisions of the ITU Radio Regulations define the amateur and amateur-satellite services respectively.

The International Amateur Radio Union welcomed the exclusion from consideration of all existing frequency allocations to the amateur and amateur-satellite services. IARU President Tim Ellam, VE6SH, observed, “This is an excellent result for the amateur services and clearly shows that non-amateur satellite constructors need to consider spectrum other than the very limited and congested segments that are available for amateur satellites at 144 MHz and 435 MHz.”

** This is a call for nomination for council. The following councillors retire after a two year period on the SARL Council. They are: Fritz Sutherland ZS6SF Geoff Levey ZS6C Hans van de Groenendaal ZS6AKV Riaan Greeff ZS4PR

They have indicated that they are available for nomination for a further two year period.

Rules for nomination The requirements are a nomination form, signed by 10 seconders who are all members of the SARL or either by a club of which has at least 10 members are also members of the SARL. Please refer to the Constitution - which is available on www.sarl.org.za - for more information.

This is also a call for motions to be discussed at the AGM. Motions should

be clear and concise and include a motivation and require a proposer and a seconder.

The closing date for nomination and submission of motions is on 31 January 2016 and should be addressed to the secretary at secretary@sarl.org.za or by fax to 0865528487.

** The ZS6ZU Hammies Amateur Radio Club will be participating in the December IARU Youngsters On The Air event next weekend the 19th to 20th December operating as ZS9YOTA from the National Amateur Radio Centre (NARC) at Sentech Radiokop from 12 noon Saturday to 12 noon Sunday. Start time is from 10am for the introduction to digital modes and station set up. If you are under the age of 25, you are cordially invited to participate in this prestigious event. We will be operating two stations non-stop for 24 hours. One station will be working on the 10, 15 and 20 meter bands and the other on the 40 and 80 meter bands. You do not have to be a licensed operator to join in the fun. You will be working under an experienced licensed operator who will be there to guide you all the way.

We will be sleeping over at NARC, so if you want to stay over for the 24 hours, you are responsible for your own food, sleeping gear, toiletries, change of clothes, cutlery, mugs and snacks as well as a torch.

The club braai master Graham ZS6GL, will be attending to the fire, early Saturday evening. Refreshments will be provided. Dinner Hamburgers and Breakfast Cereal and muffins.

To help cover costs, a small donation will be welcome.

If you are going to join in and will be staying overnight, then please contact Noel ZR6DX on 082 490 9934 Graham ZS6GL on 083 442 7777 or email zr6dx@iafrica.com

** Applications for membership of the SARL have been received from the following persons:

ZR6JH Johannes Hendrik van Wyk ZR2JAB Jarrad Brown

The Noord-Natal Amateur Radio Klub have renewed their affiliation. ZS5NAK Nortern-Natal Amateur Radio Club

Any objections to the acceptance of the applications must reach the Secretary before or on the Tuesday after the bulletin.

Membership of the SARL currently stands at 1596 plus 42 affiliated clubs

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. None of the visible sunspots pose a threat for serious flaring.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 63.

The 20 to 10 m bands will provide lots DX fun, especially during the early mornings and late afternoons.

Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Diary of events

13 December - the ARRL 10 metre contest 18 December - the NARC closes for the Christmas holidays 26 December - closing date for articles for the January 2016 Radio ZS 31 December - destroy your copy of the 2015 Blue Book 1 January - download a copy of the 2016 Blue Book 5 January - the NARC opens for business

And that brings us to the end of this bulletin

** Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dawie Conradie, ZR6DHC, edited by Brian Utterson, ZS6AE, and read by

From the entire news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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